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Paul Wegener in the title-role of *The Golem*, 1920, a German film-legend.

Work and Progress of the Film Library

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Work and Progress

From the moment that the Museum of Modern Art Film Library was envisaged, it became clear that its first task would be to trace and then to acquire as many as possible of the outstanding films of the past forty years, so that they might be preserved permanently. It would have been fruitless, however, merely to preserve them. The major obligation undertaken by the Film Library was to create a consciousness of history and tradition within the new art of the motion picture. An initial step towards this end was therefore to make available the greatest possible number of meritorious films, from each of the four decades of film progress, for all who desired to regard them not, as commonly, in the light of ephemeral entertainment, but instead, as a significant expression of contemporary aesthetics, of morals and of manners. This the Film Library accordingly planned to do, by providing programs of these outstanding films for circulation to educational institutions throughout the country. Museums and colleges would thus be enabled for the first time to present to their members or students year by year the material for a considered study of the film and its development. The result would be twofold: first, a practical summing up of an entire era of cinema creation, in the form of the most valid films themselves, and second, a theoretical summing up of film aesthetics, based on a close examination of those same films. Such an examination was bound, in any event, to strip the film of forty years of prejudice, of legend and of ballyhoo that has hitherto delayed its full recognition as an art profoundly characteristic of our era.

Since its foundation in May, 1935, the Museum of Modern Art Film Library has formed a collection of close on seven hundred films made between 1895 and 1934. These include a considerable proportion of the memorable films both of America and of Europe. Such rapid progress towards the first of its tasks has been possible only because the film industry as a whole, both here and abroad, and individual men and women connected now or formerly with the film industry in its many phases, have generously and energetically cooperated with the Film Library's endeavors. From this constantly growing collection of motion pictures the Film Library has already assembled three complete series of film programs for circulation to museums, colleges and educational groups, to serve as study material on the history and influence of the motion picture.

It is the purpose of the Film Library to make these programs available to all educational institutions. Full details of the three series are given in the back pages. The conditions under which they may be shown are as follows: Any edu-



From one of Louis Lumière's earliest films, 50 feet long, *Pastime in the Family Circle*, 1896.

cational or cultural organization may obtain these series of films for the fee of \$125.00 for five programs or \$40 for a single program, by writing to the Film Library and arranging suitable exhibition dates. Two copies of a license defining the non-commercial and educational purpose of the exhibitions will then be furnished for acceptance and signature, one copy to be returned to the Film Library.

Each program includes the films themselves, program notes for each member of the audience, and printed music for pianoforte accompaniment of all silent films. The films are sent express collect from the nearest point of distribution—either New York, Minneapolis or San Francisco—and must be returned to the same point express prepaid.

The first series of films, "A Short Survey of the Film in America, 1895-1932," provides the groundwork for a general study of the history of the film and of the influences to which it has been subject: its successive programs show how the motion picture proceeded from fact to fiction, from sensation to emotion, how it gained in length, in content and in technical resources as more and more of its potentialities were discovered. In the second or subsidiary series,

"Some Memorable American Films, 1896-1935," a first consideration is offered of the many and varied categories into which motion pictures fall. The third series, "The Film in Germany and in France," introduces the study of the European films which have played so important a part in the growth of cinematography as a whole.

Each of these three series of films consists of five or more complete programs: each program lasts approximately two hours. They are composed, not of a haphazard or merely chronological grouping of forgotten pictures, but of examples exhibiting distinct contributions made to the progress of screen technique. In the captions which preface each program, as well as in those which precede each individual film, there has been an effort to indicate clearly the importance of the period or school of cinematography under consideration, and of the significance of the single examples shown in the light of the whole forty years of development. In addition, printed program notes of carefully annotated historical data and critical comment are provided for distribution to the members of every audience witnessing the films. In these, more fully than was possible in the captions, there is also an account of the historical, technical or aesthetic importance of each film revived and the part that it, or films like it, played in the particular period illustrated. Printed music is also sent out with the programs to provide a pianoforte accompaniment for the silent pictures, while still photographs from the films are available at a nominal price for reproduction or for exhibition.

There remain several obstacles to overcome, of which certainly the most serious is that there are still many colleges or museums which cannot give the programs, though they wish to, for lack of the necessary equipment. This difficulty tends to be overcome as the use of films in education grows more general: but, happily, in the meantime the Film Library has found a partial solution since it has been able to arrange that any educational institution subscribing to the Film Library's programs may participate in a group-purchase of motion picture equipment at the lowest possible cost to the individual institution, and may also arrange payments over a period of time.

A quite different problem arises from the lack of prestige under which this new art has struggled, and from the habit of regarding films as entertainment only. It is not easy for all students to approach the film seriously, as they have been trained to approach the drama or lyric poetry or painting. In some quarters, there seems at first to have been a quite erroneous idea that the Film Library was chiefly concerned with "old" films, which themselves were therefore risible or quaint like an "old" (but not yet antique or venerable)

costume. On the whole, the programs themselves quickly dispelled this idea, since they embrace talking films made not more than a year or so ago, as well as "primitives" of 1896 that, by their remoteness, have already acquired dignity.

As for films of the intervening period, as students become accustomed to review the productions of ten or twenty years ago, they come also to be as little amazed into laughter at seeing heroines in the dresses of 1927 or 1917 as they are by watching athletes in the unfamiliar poses revealed by slow-motion photography.

The first two series of films, "A Short Survey of the Film in America, 1895-1932" and "Some Memorable American Films, 1896-1935," devoted principally to the American film or to foreign films having an immediate influence in America, have already been shown by eighty-two institutions in the United States and Canada. These will remain permanently available unless or until they are re-edited at a later date.

The third and newest series represents the first-fruits of an extensive European trip undertaken by the director and the curator last summer, and is composed of important German and French films. This will be available on and after January 1st, 1937. Thus, within the first year of its active existence, the Film Library has brought back for serious study some fifty-nine motion pictures, all of which illustrate steps in the development of the new medium.

Subsequent series of films to be made available will restore memorable Danish, English, Italian, Russian and Swedish productions to the screen and, of course, many more outstanding American films than have so far been revived. By the end of its third year of activity, the Film Library will have provided a broad survey of the film's history as a whole. Thereafter, a more searching analysis of film aesthetics, based on first-hand knowledge of the material, will become possible, and students of the film will for the first time be in a position to approach this as they have previously approached the more venerable arts. Since the film has a wide and profound influence on contemporary life—on the ideology, the manners and the fashions of a vast public—such an approach is much to be desired on sociological as well as on aesthetic or academic grounds.

The work of the Film Library has not been limited, however, to assembling or circulating important films: an immense amount of necessary collateral material is also being acquired, and is constantly being supplemented. Its collection of books on the cinema already numbers 589, in addition to many periodicals, and is continually being increased. Still-photographs, posters and original designs for costumes and film settings also form part of the Library. These last range from Leopold Survage's water-color paintings of 1912-14,



Taking the trench scenes for *All Quiet on the Western Front*, 1930, directed by Lewis Milestone.

designed for an abstract color film but never produced, to examples of the paintings on celluloid from which the recent Disney cartoons have been photographed. In addition, an important group of original scenarios is being amassed together with many original documents and analogous items of interest such, for example, as the manuscript of the poem-scenario by Robert Desnos for Man Ray's film *Etoile de Mer*, and S. M. Eisenstein's notes for his film *Que Viva Mexico*. Biographical data on outstanding producers, directors and artists is being collated, much of it from word-of-mouth and never before set down. All of this material, invaluable to the staff of the Film Library in the research work necessary for the preparation of the film programs and the writing of the

program notes, is also freely available to students, to journalists and to authors who, in increasing numbers, are having recourse to this unique library.

Even during the first year, the reaction both of the press and of the academic world to the Film Library's endeavors has far surpassed expectation, while their interest and support have done much to assist and to popularize this work.

Comment on the Film Library's activities has appeared in over 1300 publications—newspapers, periodicals and books, including such widely diverse publications as *The Moscow Daily News*, *Vogue* and Allardyce Nicoll's *Film and Theatre*. Of particular interest has been the wide variety of methods in which the Film Library's circulating programs of films have been used and presented in different localities. At Princeton, the programs were given by the Department of Art and Archeology, at William and Mary by the Department of Fine Arts, at Cornell by the Department of Public Speaking, at the University of Washington by the Division of Drama, at the University of Minnesota by the Department of Visual Education, at Columbia by the Institute of Arts and Sciences, and at the University of California by the Extension Division, while at Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri, they are sponsored by the Department of Radio and Visual Education and at Smith College by the Department of Economics and Sociology. In Buffalo, the Albright Art Gallery and Buffalo University, neither of which had a suitable auditorium, combined to form a film society which gave its programs in a local cinema theatre at an hour when it was not open to the general public: in Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Museum of Art and the Philadelphia Art Alliance also gave joint showings, and in Tacoma, Washington, the work was carried out by the combined Tacoma Dramatic League and Tacoma Newspaper Guild. In Canada, a National Film Society has been formed which circulates the programs from headquarters in Ottawa to its Kingston, Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto branches.

Thus, within the first eighteen months of its existence, the Museum of Modern Art Film Library has been able to fulfill its obligations even beyond expectation. It has rescued many films of historical importance from imminent danger of total destruction, it has made rapid progress with its collection of films of all types and periods, and it has established the nucleus of a really practical library of information and reference on the various aspects of cinematography. Even more important since the film as a medium of creative expression is a living force in our times, the Film Library is now widely circulating its programs, through which, step by step, the film's history and aesthetic is being made evident to students for the first time. It will be towards developing and increasing this service in particular that the activity of the Film Library will be directed during the coming season.

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library: Series I

A Short Survey of the Film in America, 1895-1932

All the films in this series are available currently on either 16 mm. or 35 mm. non-flam stock. The charge for the series consisting of five programs is \$125, plus express charges but including films, program notes and printed music for piano accompaniment of all silent films. The charge for a single program is \$40, but additional programs may be booked by institutions having shown a complete series for \$25 each. Still-photographs may be purchased.

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| 1. The Development
of Narrative
7 reels | 1895 The Execution of Mary Queen of Scots (Edison)
1896 Wash Day Troubles
1902 A Trip to the Moon by George Méliès
1903 The Great Train Robbery by Edwin S. Porter
(Edison)
1910 Faust , a Pathé film
1911 Queen Elizabeth with Sarah Bernhardt (Paramount) |
| 2. The Rise of the
American Film
11 reels | 1912 The New York Hat by D. W. Griffith, with Mary Pick-
ford and Lionel Barrymore (Miss Pickford)
1914 The Fugitive by Thomas H. Ince, with Wm. S. Hart
1917 The Clever Dummy , a Mack Sennett comedy
1914 A Fool There Was with Theda Bara (Fox) |
| 3. D. W. Griffith
13 reels | 1916 Intolerance (D. W. Griffith) |
| 4. The German
Influence
13 reels | 1928 Hands by Stella Simon (Mrs. Simon) *
1927 Sunrise by F. W. Murnau (Fox) * |
| 5. The Talkies
13 reels | 1927 Two scenes from The Jazz Singer (Warner Bros.) *
1927 Movietone newsreel with George Bernard Shaw
(Fox) *
1930 All Quiet on the Western Front (Universal) *
1928 Steam Boat Willie by Walt Disney (Disney) * |
| 5a. The End of the
Silent Era
10 reels | 1928 Plane Crazy , the first Mickey Mouse (Disney)
1928 The Last Command by Josef von Sternberg (Para-
mount) |

*Films marked with an * need sound equipment.*

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library: Series II

Some Memorable American Films, 1896-1935

The programs in this series are planned as an extension to those in Series I and should, as a rule, not be shown unless the first Series has already been given. All the films in Series II are available currently under the same conditions as hold for Series I.

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| 1. The "Western"
Film
11 reels | 1903 The Great Train Robbery by Porter (Edison)
1915 The Last Card by Thomas H. Ince, with Wm. S. Hart
1923 The Covered Wagon by James Cruze (Paramount) |
| 2. "Comedies"
13 reels | 1900 The Doctor's Secret by Georges Méliès
1909 Gertie the Dinosaur by Winsor McCay (McCay)
1916 His Bitter Pill , a Mack Sennett satire
1925 The Freshman with Harold Lloyd (Harold Lloyd)
1928 The Sex Life of the Polyp with Robert Benchley (Fox) *
1929 The Skeleton Dance by Walt Disney (Disney) * |
| 3. The Film and Contemporary Life
14 reels | 1935 March of Time No. 2 (March of Time) *
1933 Cavalcade by Frank Lloyd (Fox) * |
| 4. Mystery and Violence
9 or 11 reels | c1907-8 Tatters: A Tale of the Slums (Cricks & Martin)
1927 Underworld by Josef von Sternberg (Paramount)
or 1928 The Cat and the Canary by Paul Leni (Universal) |
| 5. Screen Personalities
11 or 12 reels | 1896 The May Irwin-John C. Rice Kiss (Edison)
1915 Enoch Arden with Wallace Reid and Lillian Gish (two reels only)
1924 Monsieur Beaucaire with Rudolph Valentino (Paramount)
or 1928 The Last Command with Emil Jannings (Paramount) |

*Films marked with an * need sound equipment.*

The Museum of Modern Art Film Library: Series III

The Film in Germany and the Film in France

The programs in this series will become available only on the dates specified. The supplementary programs will, as a rule, be provided only to institutions or groups that have already given the series as a whole. All of the films will be supplied on either 16 mm. or 35 mm. non-flam stock, complete with program notes and printed music for piano accompaniment for silent films, except that there will be no program notes for the supplementary programs. Still-photographs may be purchased. The series, consisting of five programs, may be booked for \$125 plus express charges, and each of the supplementary programs for \$25 plus express charges.

The Film in Germany

1. Legend and Fantasy

8 reels

Available Jan. 1, 1937

1896 Primitive German films by the pioneer Skladanowsky (Reichsfilmkammer)

1909 **Don Juan's Wedding**, a comedy with the actor Giam-pietro (Reichsfilmkammer)

c1913 **Misunderstood**, a melodrama with Germany's most popular actress, Henny Porten (Reichsfilmkammer)

1920 **The Golem**: one sequence only. Directed by the eminent actor, Paul Wegener, who also plays the title-role (Ufa)

1919 **The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari**, directed by Robert Wiene. Most celebrated of foreign films, it has seldom been shown in its entirety (Ufa)

2. The Moving Camera

8 reels

Available Jan. 15, 1937

1921 **Hamlet**: one sequence only. The Danish actress, Asta Nielsen, as Hamlet in a version derived from Saxo Grammaticus, not Shakespeare (Mrs. Philip Manson)

1924 **The Last Laugh**, directed by F. W. Murnau, with Jan-nings. Its creative use of studio mechanics had a marked influence on the American film (Ufa)

3. Pabst and Realism

9 reels

Available Feb. 1, 1937

1927 **The Love of Jeanne Ney**, directed by G. W. Pabst. A powerful essay in realism, with an international setting (Ufa)

Supplementary Programs available with the foregoing:

- 3a.**
8 reels
Available Mar. 15, 1937
- 3b.**
8 reels
Available Mar. 15, 1937
- 3c.**
6 reels
Available Mar. 15, 1937
- 1930 **The Beggars' Opera, *Dreigroschenoper*.** The opera by Brecht and Weill translated to the screen by G. W. Pabst (Warner Bros.) *
- 1923 **Siegfried**, directed by Fritz Lang. Originally a silent film, the present version has been synchronized with a musical accompaniment (Ufa) *
- 1920 **The Golem.** A legend of ancient Jewry with an expressionist setting, directed by Paul Wegener (Ufa)

The Film in France

- 4. From
Lumière to
René Clair**
9 reels
Available Feb. 15, 1937
- 1895 Films by Louis Lumière, the French pioneer. (Lumière)
- c1901 **The Runaway Horse**, an early "chase" film (Jean A. LeRoy Collection)
- 1914 **Fantomas**, a serial contemporary with *The Perils of Pauline* (Gaumont)
- 1923 **The Crazy Ray, *Paris qui Dort***, René Clair's first film (Fairfax Jones)
- 5. The
Advance
Guard**
8 reels
Available Mar. 1, 1937
- 1923 **The Smiling Madame Beudet**, a psychological study directed by Germaine Dulac (Dulac)
- 1925 **Menilmontant**, produced and directed by Dmitri Kirsanov (Kirsanov)
- 1928 **Star of the Sea, *Etoile de Mer***. Produced and directed by Man Ray, eminent American photographer and painter (Man Ray)

Supplementary Programs available with the above:

- 5a.**
6 reels
Available Mar. 15, 1937
- 1928 **The Fall of the House of Usher.** An essay in the macabre directed by Jean Epstein (Cinémathèque Française)
- 1928 **The Seashell and the Clergyman, *La Coquille et le Clergyman***, a surrealist film directed by Germaine Dulac (Dulac)
- 5b.**
8 reels
Available Mar. 15, 1937
- 1928 **Therese Raquin**, directed by Jacques Feyder. German technique combined with French psychology (Warner Bros.)

Films marked with an * require sound equipment.



Poster for *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*. Collection of the Museum of Modern Art Film Library.

Symposium on Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism

The American Artists' Congress has engaged the Museum for a symposium on Fantastic Art, Dada and Surrealism to be held on Wednesday, January 13, at 8 p.m. Speakers will be Meyer Schapiro of Columbia University, Jerome Klein of *The New York Post*, Walter Quirt, Salvador Dali and others. (The list of speakers was not complete when going to press.) There will be discussion from the floor.

The seating capacity of the Museum is 150. Admission will be \$1.00. No tickets will be sold at the door but reservations may be made at the Museum.

The Museum of Modern Art

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